

**Remarks to Arlington County Board
February 21 2026 Regular Meeting**

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, Members, thank you for your time. I'm Anne Bodine for Arlingtonians for Our Sustainable Future. We have two key points about the revision of the Comprehensive Plan.

First: two years into the review of the plan's introduction, a core problem remains that the plan itself is very fractured. Partly because the county is keeping from public view the very documents it is proposing to amend, expunging from its website **existing** guidance about retaining low density areas, as we noted in a letter to you this month. Additionally, the County webpage shows only 12 elements of the plan in the big rainbow wheel, leaving out the Public Art element! If the National Archives managed to expunge all texts of the constitution or showed us a Bill of Rights with only 9 amendments, could we have confidence in a process to amend any part of the whole? We could not. And so it is with the comp plan. We ask you to publish the full current text – in one combined searchable document -- so we can readily engage with you on a common baseline.

Second: Key leaders including board members have said the Comp Plan is outdated and doesn't reflect sub-elements added since 1960. And Board Chair de Ferranti this week raised a new concern, that references to "secure neighborhoods" may be racially exclusive dog whistles. ASF agrees we should remove language that contravenes civil rights law. But our Chair was not right to say this was part of the Comp Plan. In fact, there is no mention of "security" or "secure neighborhoods" in the Comp Plan intro or goals – the subject of this whole exercise. And we know this because we have the accurate original language from 1960 that you released per our FOIA request. It seems instead the Board chair is worried about the **County Vision** – which GUIDES but sits apart from the Comp plan – and which was in fact last revised in 2002, not 1960. We are open to reviewing that paragraph.

But we insist on a better process that starts with the original current full document And we're giving you new language as a proposed introduction that reflects all 13 comp plan elements and core goals that are now in effect. See our handout: what's

not to like? I think we can agree it will shorten and clarify this very long process and let us focus on this 2019 quote from [former County Manager] Ron Carlee that we want:

Preservation of “single-family neighborhoods and many of the historic garden apartments”existing side by side with “fiscally successful corridors of urban villages.”